



DESERT DEVIL DISPATCH

Vol. 2, No. 2

Serving the men and women of Regional Command East, Operation Enduring Freedom - Afghanistan

July 4, 2005

Air Defenders put boots on the ground, increase security



Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke

2nd Lt. Micah Ramseur, a platoon leader with Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 4th Air Defense Artillery Regiment (Airborne) discusses security concerns with local Afgans with the help of an interpreter June 28. Btry. A also provided security at a voter registration point located at a nearby police station.

By Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke
Editor

KHOWST, Afghanistan—Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 4th Air Defense Artillery Regiment (Airborne) found themselves in an odd situation for paratroopers who train to shoot enemy forces out of the sky; walking a crowded Afghan street and meeting with local leaders to address security issues.

Since arriving in Afghanistan about six weeks ago, the "sky-strikers" have been tasked to operate under the com-

mand of Task Force White Devil, which is built around 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment.

Operating within an infantry task force has put the paratroopers in similar types of operations that normally would be conducted by infantry companies, said Capt. John Redford, a Fostoria, Ohio, native and the commander of A Btry.

"We are still a little behind the power curve," said Redford when describing his unit's ability to

operate as effectively as an infantry company. "But we have trained here with White Devil elements to help with our transition into these operations."

Even with the difficulties of learning new combat skills the paratroopers of Btry. A enjoy the mission that has been handed to them.

"It is fun," said Spc. Josh Harris, a Harrisonburg, Va., native and armorer with Btry. A.

"Last deployment we hardly left the wire," he

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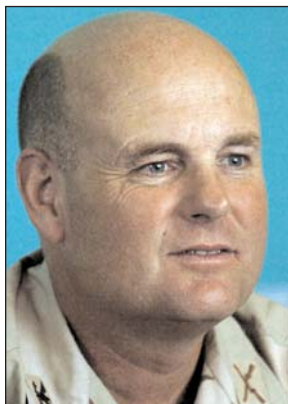
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July 4, 2005

July 4th message from Devil 6

Col. Patrick J. Donahue

Commander, Combined Task Force Devil



Col. Patrick J. Donahue, CTF Devil commander.

On July 4, 2005, we will celebrate the 229th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. Our Nation began a long journey on that day, predicated on the principles of freedom and liberty. Today, we are part of a worldwide coalition

that is seeking to establish a free and sovereign Nation in Afghanistan, based upon similar principles.

Establishing a new Nation of Afghanistan and providing its citizens freedom and liberty is not without a personal sacrifice and commitment

from each member of this Task Force. No one understands this more than each of you. Your efforts and diligence are paying off. Our operations conducted to establish that great mechanism of a free and

"Today, we are part of a worldwide coalition that is seeking to establish a free and sovereign nation in Afghanistan based on similar (to U.S.) principles."

-Col. Patrick J. Donahue
Commander, Combined Task
Force Devil

independent society, democratic elections, are enrolling thousands of Afghans to vote and participate in self governance. It is a clear demonstration that we succeeding in setting the conditions for the people of Afghanistan to

enjoy the reward of self governance.

I thank you all on a special and significant day in our own Nation's history as our Task Force assists in the establishment of a new Afghan Nation.

Devil Voices: What would you play on the FOB loudspeaker?



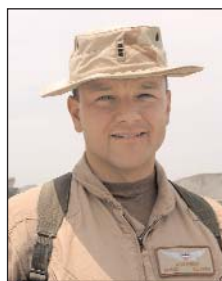
Pvt. Justin M. Crews

"I'd play 'Mother' by Pink Floyd."



Spc. Stephen M. Scull

"I'd play 'American Soldier' by Toby Keith because it shows me how much we're appreciated out here."



Chief Warrant Officer Rob W. Purdy

"I'd play 'Let the Bodies Hit the Floor' by Drowning Pool because it's appropriate for what's happening around here right now."



Staff Sgt. Len A. Neal

"I'd play 'Flight of the Valkyries' by Wagner because it's just something to get the blood pumping."

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To view back issues of the *Desert Devil Dispatch*, visit http://www.bragg.army.mil/afvc/a/desert_devil_dispatches.htm

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Signal keeps TF talking

Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke
Editor

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan- Forward Operating Base Salerno is a hub of information. Combined Task Force Devil, Task Force White Devil, Logistics Task Force 307, and other units all base their operations out of FOB Salerno. The FOB sits near the Afghan-Pakistan border and is one of the busiest regions in the war on terror.

Every time a tower guard makes a radio check, a unit in the field calls for artillery or close air support, and someone sends an email back home to a loved one it is made possible by the Soldiers of the 44th Signal Battalion and CTF Devil signal section who maintain the communications equipment used by the task force.

With nearly 3,000 Soldiers operating out of FOB Salerno, keeping the base connected is like managing the communications systems of a small town, said 1st Lt. Ashok

"Siv" Sivakumar, a Lawrencville, N.J., native and help desk officer in charge for the 44th. The 44th operates and maintains the secret and unclassified computer networks as well as the phone lines used on FOB Salerno.

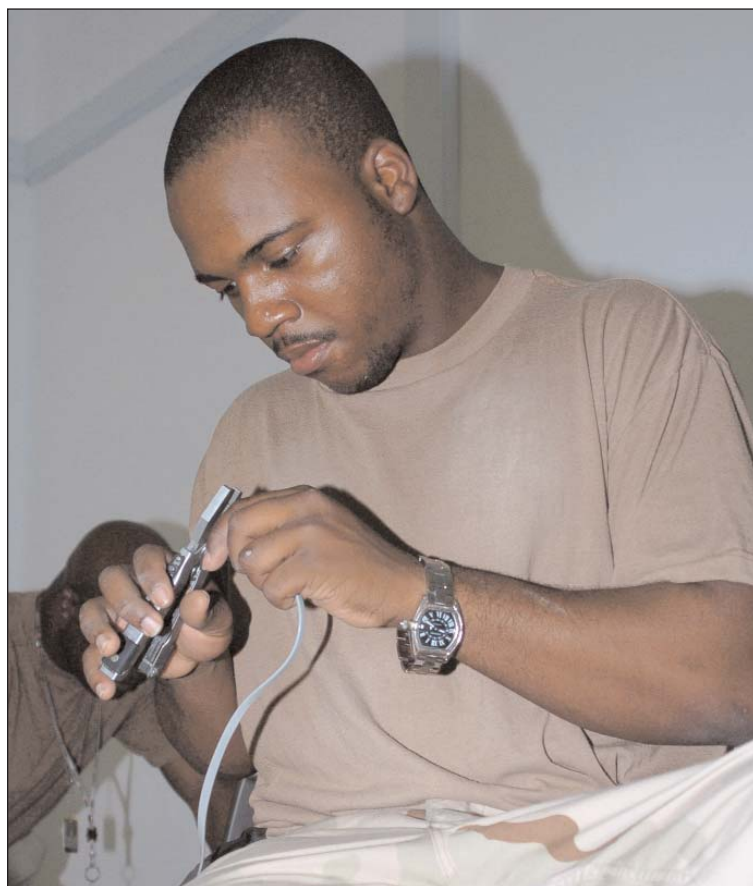
"We probably have 20 kilometers of (communications) lines running throughout the FOB," Sivakumar added.

"The biggest challenge for us is making the base run like Bagram with a staff sized for a smaller forward operating base," Sivakumar said.

One Soldier who depends on the FOB's communications systems for every aspect of his job is Sgt. Armando Rodriguez, a Gibsonburg, Ohio, native and operations noncommissioned officer with CTF Devil headquarters.

Rodriguez's job is to know the locations of all the units operating in Regional Command East and inform the command and units in the field if there are friendly troops near each other. As an infantryman he has seen

See "Signal" page 10



Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke

Above, Pvt. Twuan Wright, a Manning, S.C., native and communications specialist with Task Force Saber cuts wires that will be used to link an aviation operations center to the rest of Forward Operating Base Salerno.

Devil troops reenlist at Salerno

Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke
Editor

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan- Twelve Soldiers and one Airman of Combined Task Force Devil reenlisted June 20, in front of the task force tactical operations center.

Staff Sgt. Keith Uhart, Sgt. Freddy Sawyer, Spc. Daniel Motika, Spc. Daniel Thompson, from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, Spc. King, Spc. Luis Bonet, from 2nd Battalion, 504th PIR, Sgt. Hereford, Sgt. Darren Tatum, from 3rd Battalion, 4th Air Defense Artillery Regiment (Airborne), Staff Sgt. Eric Caplan, Sgt. Joseph Huffman, Sgt. Jeremy Mayhall, Spc. Rachel Michaud, Spc. Cathryn Munroe, from 307th Forward Support Battalion, and Air Force Tech Sgt. Juan Valentin reenlisted during the mass ceremony.

For many, the opportunity to reenlist while serving in the war on terror added a special benefit to their reenlistment aside from cash bonuses, special duty assignments and other perks that usually come with renewing one's contract with the Army.

"Reenlisting in a combat zone is something you won't often get a chance to do," said Motika, a Northampton Pa., native on his second tour in the war on terror. "This is something you will always remember throughout your military career," he added.

Motika's sentiments were echoed by more senior Soldiers who had reenlisted before.

"I had planned on reenlisting anyways, so being able to do it here is just another benefit of continuing to serve," said Uhart, a team chief with the task force headquarters communications section.

Soldiers interested in reenlistment are should visit the task force retention office here and speak with a career counselor.



Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke

Servicemembers of Combined Task Force Devil reenlist June 20, at Forward Operating Base Salerno.

Salerno troops weigh in on new ACU

By **Spc. Laura E. Griffin**
Assitant Editor

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan - The new look for the Army is making its first appearance in Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan on the incoming civil affairs soldiers from the 492nd Civil Affairs Battalion.

The Advanced Combat Uniform, with its digital camouflage pattern and reconfigured pockets, stands out in the crowd of Desert Camouflage Uniform clad soldiers already stationed here.

The new uniform has several improved features over the old DCUs.

The most obvious is the new digital pattern that can be worn in both jungle and desert environments.

After so many years of seeing the old standard camouflage pattern, the new digital pattern can take some getting used to.

"At first I didn't like the look of the digital pattern, but now I just love them," said Spc. Pete A. Alvarez, a civil affairs specialist in the 492nd. "I wouldn't want to wear another uniform."

Alvarez and the other civil affairs specialists in his unit were issued the new uniform two weeks ago at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Then there are the reconfigured

pockets. The pockets were designed for accessibility when wearing the Individual Body Armor vest.

There is one pocket on the upper part of each sleeve and a three pen pockets on the lower part of the left sleeve. The two pockets on the upper chest are slanted inward for easier accessibility. There are no pockets on the lower part of the blouse.

The old familiar cargo pockets on the trousers are still there, but with a new twist: they now have a drawstring and are slightly larger. There are also new pockets on the lower part of the leg.

All of the pockets close with Velcro.

"The pockets are the best part of the uniform," said Pvt. 1st Class Geoff L. Akers, a civil affairs specialist with the 492nd. "I keep a camera in my upper right arm pocket, Altoids in my lower left leg pocket, two pens and one pencil on my sleeve, my I.D. card and orders in my upper left arm pocket, a small notebook on my chest, and the right side cargo pocket is the variable. That could be another notebook, toothpaste or maybe an apple."

The buttons on the front of the blouse have also been replaced with small hook and pile tape patches, which are accompanied by a full-length zipper for full closure in the winter.

"The hook and pile tape (on the front of the ACU blouse) is more convenient,"



Spc. Laura E. Griffin

Spc. Pete A. Alvarez, a civil affairs specialist with the 492nd Civil Affairs Battalion, puts a pen in the sleeve pocket of his new Advanced Combat Uniform June 23 at Forward Operating Base Salerno. The pen pocket was one of many uniform changes.

said Duncan. "It makes them easier to get in and out of."

The uniform also features hook and pile tape slots for knee and elbow pad inserts that are issued with the uniform and small, coverable patches on the sleeves and Advanced Combat Helmet cover that are visible with night vision goggles.

The overall cut of the uniform is more generous to allow for greater movement.

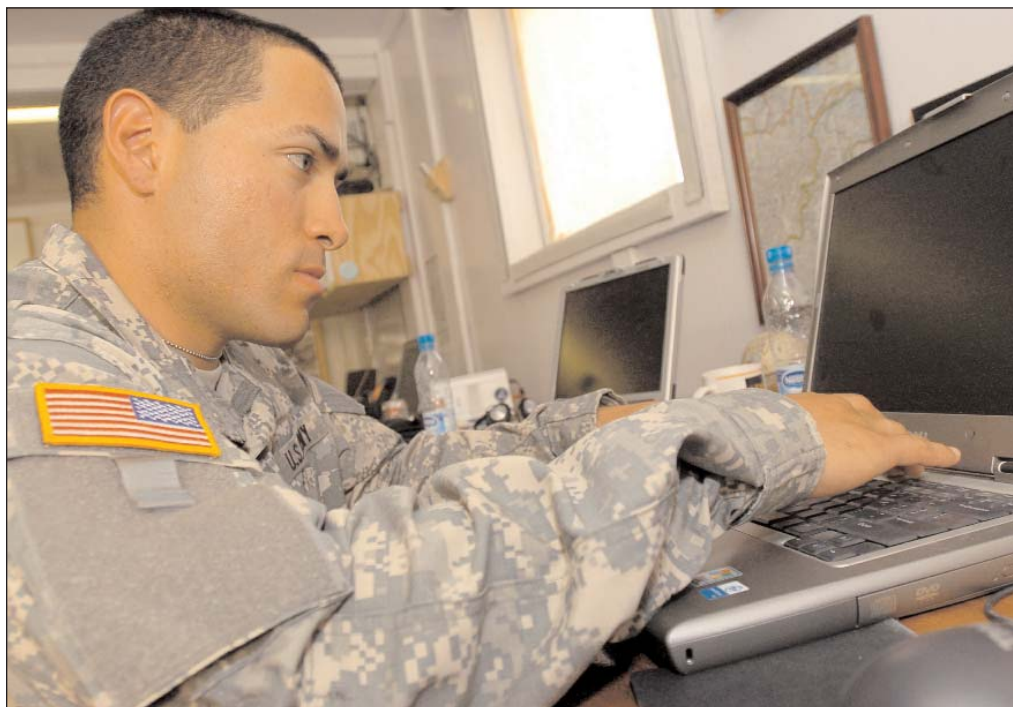
"They're tailored to fit a lot better and allow for more flexibility," said Spc. Jennifer M. Duncan, a civil affairs specialist in the 492nd.

Alvarez agrees that the flexibility of the new uniform is a big improvement over the older uniforms.

"With the new ACUs, I can shoot a basketball without it affecting my shot," he said. "I couldn't do that with my old uniform."

Not everything is rosy about the new ACUs though. Some soldiers have concerns about the breathability of the fabric, which is wind resistant. Others are worried that the Velcro fasteners will not work when they get dirty, or that items in the lower leg pockets will get wet when a stream is crossed.

There are definitely compromises, but the feel and mobility out weighs everything, said Alvarez.



Spc. Laura E. Griffin

Spc. Pete A. Alvarez, a civil affairs specialist with the 492nd Civil Affairs Battalion, works in his office while wearing the new Advanced Combat Uniform June 23 at Forward Operating Base Salerno. The 492nd is one of the first units to be wearing the new uniform in Reginald Command East.

FOB Postal unit on the lookout

Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke
Editor

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO, Afghanistan - For many Soldiers of Combined Task Force Devil, deployment to Afghanistan offers the chance to see and experience things that can only be found nearly half way around the world from home.

What Soldiers may not know is it is illegal to send in the mail or take with them certain items according to rules in place by U.S. Customs.

Some items are obviously prohibited from shipment to the U.S., such as weapons, drugs and related paraphernalia, but others such as rocks or plants may have seemed like the perfect gift.

"The strangest thing we have confiscated was a certain rubber female body part," said Spc. Joy Hodo, a Birmingham, Ala., native and mail clerk with the 510th Postal which operates out of Forward Operating Base Salerno. She said that the item in question fell under rules about pornographic or sensitive items.

Items prohibited from being mailed are flammable and combustible liquids and solids, cigarette lighters, oxidizing substances, organic peroxides, toxic substances, infectious substances, clinical specimens (unless mailed by a medical facility), radioactive materials, corrosives, magnetized materials, dry ice, firearms or replicas of firearms, ammunition, cartridge casings, switchblade knives (or any other spring

operated knife), intoxicating liquor, matter emitting obnoxious odors, controlled substances, drug paraphernalia, pesticides, lewd or pornographic materials, matter inciting violence, sexually oriented advertisements, pandering advertisements, politically, socially or racially offensive items, military issue equipment, fireworks, sand or soil, pork and pork products and Meals Ready to Eat.

Some military equipment, such as cold weather shirts, boots and other items that will not need to be returned to the issuing facility may be sent, Hodo added.

"Most of the stuff we have to confiscate is pornographic materials," said Spc. J'son Tyson, a Jamaica native, and postal clerk with the 510th.

Even if Soldiers are able to sneak a few contraband items past their initial inspection there is still no guarantee a package will make it to its final destination, according to Hodo. Packages are further checked and X-rayed at mail stops in Bahrain, and New York.

Not only are the Soldiers of the 510th making sure outgoing mail meets legal requirements, but they occasionally report suspicious packages to the recipients commander and first sergeant.

"We did have some (mouth wash) bottles that came in a package that smelled like alcohol," said Tyson. "In that case we had the first sergeant come pick up the package and take it to the Soldier."

With all the regulations and rules governing what is sent and received in the mail it

may seem like the 510th is the "package police." However the Soldiers working in the 510th say their top priority is getting the mail to the troops.

"Our primary mission has and always will be getting the mail to the troops, and we are working hard to do that," Hodo said.



Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke

Spc. J'son Tyson, a Jamaica native and postal clerk with the 510th Postal, reads a bag of outgoing mail at Forward Operating Base Salerno.

To the high ground...

An Afghan National Army soldier rushes children to a waiting helicopter June 23. More than 119 people were stranded by the rising flood waters of the Indus River in the Logman Province. ANA, Coalition and aid agencies coordinated their efforts for the rescue operation when a dam upstream broke.



Four CJSOTF Soldiers honored

Combined Forces Afghanistan News Release

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force - Afghanistan honored four Special Forces soldiers in a sunset memorial June 22 who were killed in action in eastern Afghanistan.

Capt. Charles Robinson and Staff Sgt. Leroy Alexander were killed in action June 3, 2005 when they were attacked by hostile forces by a remotely detonated Improvised Explosive Device in the Paktika Province of Afghanistan. Staff Sgt. Christopher Piper was severely wounded in action during the same IED strike. Piper passed away as a result of his wounds

at the Army Burn Center, Fort Sam Houston, June 16. Sgt. 1st Class Cervantes was killed in action June 10 while responding to Coalition forces in contact with the enemy in the vicinity of Paktika Province.

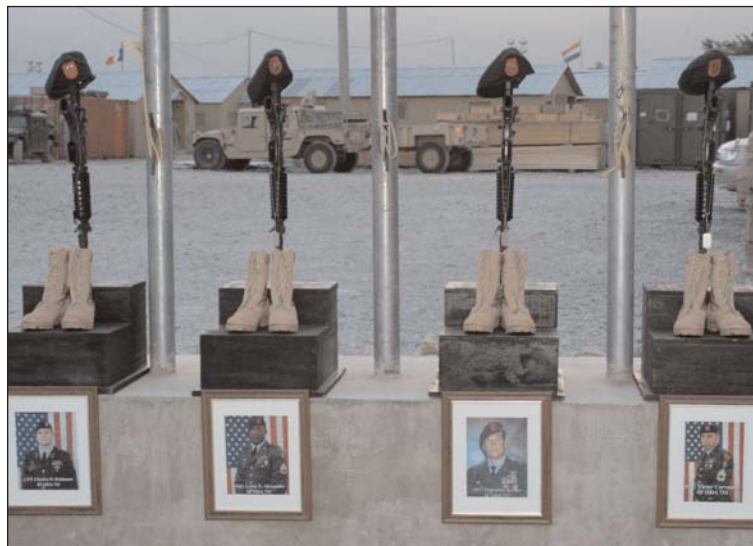
All four soldiers were killed while conducting their assigned tasks during operations in the Paktika Province.

"These warriors exemplified personal courage, unwavering values, commitment, and selfless service. They were willing to lay it all on the line to secure the American way of life and to free others from oppression," said the CJSOTF-A commander.

Robinson, Cervantes, Alexander, and Piper were honored with "Taps," sharp salutes, and a prayer. The ceremony

ended with a final Benediction, "Ballad of the Green Berets" and

individuals rendering final respects.



The memorials for four Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force Soldiers who were killed in action.

Mehtar Lam welcomes new PRT

By Sgt. 1st Class Curtis Matsushige
117th MPAD

MEHTAR LAM, Afghanistan-Even with mortars still in position and guard towers still manned by troops, the Forward operating base here is undergoing a significant transition from a for-

ward operating base used to hunt down the enemy to a provincial reconstruction team.

Dr. Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan, officially announced the transition of the forward operating base to a provincial reconstruction team. At the invitation of local

and national government steps will be taken to establish a PRT in Laghman.

Khalilzad spoke to the audience of democracy in terms of honest law enforcement, bringing criminals and judges who would punish offenders, and a free press to hold the people in charge accountable for their actions and policies.

Shah Mahmood Safi, governor of Laghman, welcomed the PRT to the city of Mehtar Lam and the province.

Brig. Gen. Aminollah of the Afghan National Army said that the national army soldiers who will work with the PRT come from many of the tribes, but fight together for Afghanistan against oppression of the Taliban or any organization that poses a threat.

Brig. Gen. James Champion representing Combined Joint Task Force 76, voiced the continuing U.S. support and the challenge for people to vote in the upcoming elections.

Coalition forces present will provide security to insure the safety of government agencies and non-government organizations working in Laghman.

At the ceremony's conclusion, a local commander walked hand-in-hand with Ambassador Khalilzad to a display of weapons, turned into the commander presenry, as a hope for peace in the region.

Maj. Sam Agag, assumed command of the newly dedicated PRT.



Sgt. 1st Class Curtis Matsushige

Dr. Zalmay Khalilzad, U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan views the weapons collected in a voluntary weapons turn-in program in Lahgman. Right, is Maj. Sam Agag Provincial reconstruction Team commander, left, are two commanders and Brig Gen. James Champion, Combined Joint Task Force 76.

TF Bayonet conducts OP Diablo Reach Back

Staff Sgt. Jacob Caldwell

Combined Task Force Bayonet PAO

Kandahar, AFGHANISTAN - In a 20-day mission in northern Kandahar Province, Combined Task Force Bayonet forces engaged Taliban forces in some of the fiercest fighting seen this year.

Led by the 3rd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, coalition forces kicked off the military operation known as Diablo Reach Back June 7 in the rugged, mountainous terrain of Shah Wali Kot district.

The coalition forces included soldiers and policemen from the Afghan National Army, Afghan National Police, the Romanian Army, and U.S. forces from the 3-319th AFAR, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, and the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

Diablo Reach Back, a follow-up mission to Diablo Reach conducted in May 2005, was designed to clear the area of anti-coalition militia so that the provincial government of Kandahar can establish a permanent presence and a good line of communication in the remote, northern district, according to Lt. Col. Bert Ges, 3-319th AFAR and Task Force Gundevel Commander.

The Shah Wali Kot district is considered

to be one of the last Taliban strongholds in Kandahar province, but that may soon end as the patience of the district's residents grows thin with the anti-coalition forces.

"For the most part, the people out here are tired of the Taliban," said Ges, "Because there is no government representation out here, the Taliban come out of the hills and take their food, beat on them, harass them, and then leave."

Establishing security in the district is the first priority, said Ges, but another is to strengthen the positions of the district leadership. Once this is done, reconstruction efforts can begin in the embattled region.

Ges wants to establish a satellite police station in Gumbad by July 1.

"Gumbad to me is very key terrain in the Gumbad valley," said Ges, "The people are supportive of us. We have had several major shuras there. We have identified a building, and we want to rent it. We are going to bring ANP forces up there. Anywhere from 20 to 40 men and then we will augment them with (U.S. forces), anywhere from 16 to 40 men. That is to get the infrastructure started, establish communications, and then we'll nominate a project for an actual police sub-station there."

"I've put a very aggressive timeline of 1 July for this project. I just want to get some troops up there," said Ges, "I realize they

may be living out of their vehicle for the first few weeks. But I just want to get them in there, get a foothold and then expand from there. Every time we are in that village they know that we can provide security. They see the helicopters and the artillery fire. But when we leave, the Taliban can then return. So that's why in the Gumbad project we want to show that permanent presence. Get the ANP there and help them out."

Security has been a challenge in the district. This operation alone saw minor battles near the villages of Zamto Kalay and Chenartu. There was also significant enemy contact made by Delta Company, 2-504th PIR June 14 in the vicinity of Takht Kalay and June 17 in the vicinity of Gumbad.

"The men that we are fighting now have been around for awhile," said Ges, "They know how we fight, so we have to be very quick and aggressive..."

All of the operations that we have had during Diablo Reach Back have had ANA soldiers with them. They are the main effort. We have substantial forces here also, but they do the bulk of the fighting."

Specifically involved in this operation were ANA soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade and ANA soldiers from Weapons Company, 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, according to Maj. Kevin Bigelman, 3-319th AFAR Operations Officer.

"The ANA did a great job. They were well equipped, well led, and they did exactly what they were tasked to do, which was to clear the objective area and the surrounding towns," said Bigelman.

"There has been a significant reduction in enemy forces," said Cpt. George Whittenburg, 3-319th AFAR Intelligence Officer, "The terrain does not lend itself to finding bodies."

The reception of coalition forces by the residents has been varied.

"At the worst, the reception has been neutral," said Ges, "But some have been very positive. It all comes down to the leadership of the villages."

Maintaining and improving the relationships with the various village elders is essential to the success of future operations in the village.

"We don't want to come into a location or objective, clear it and then leave," said Ges, "We want clear the area and then go right into civil affairs."

"What we have been doing during this operation is bringing the District Chief and the District Police Chief with us to show them the conditions of the area and let them hear what the people are saying," said Ges, "We always end up with what is called a shura, a meeting with the village leaders and elders."

"And then we do a village assessment. We review all of their issues and concerns and we are very honest with them. We get all of the potential projects that they may want to have accomplished. We take them back to Kandahar to the province headquarters. And there, they do an assessment themselves and begin to prioritize (the projects)," said Ges.

Leading an international and inter-battalion force, in what are typically infantry missions, has been a rewarding experience for Ges, a field artillery officer.

"I'm very impressed by the paratroopers who come in hard, fight the enemy, and then, like that, they are already going into the next phase, where we are trying to help the people," said Ges, "Our paratroopers know at all times that the Afghan people are not the enemy, that the enemy is the Taliban."



Staff Sgt. Jacob Caldwell

With the aid of an interpreter, Lt. Col. Bert Ges, Task Force Gundevel Commander, discusses issues with village elders during a shura held in Gumbad, a small village in Shah Wali Kot District of Kandahar Province.

HiG commanders lay down arms

By Master Sgt. Geoffrey Carter

Combined Task Force Devil PAO

GARDEZ, Afghanistan - They may not be saints but they are marching home, in droves. Eighteen of Gulbiddin Hekmatyar's Hezb-e Islami (HiG) commanders returning from Pakistan to Afghanistan took that giant step forward and turned themselves over to Governor Taniwal of Paktia Province on the twelfth of June.

These eighteen commanders came in under the terms of the Afghan government's reconciliation program titled Pakhm-e Sohl (PTS) and recently held an official ceremony to finalize their return home to Afghanistan after years of living in Pakistan.

After a meeting with Governor Taniwal and Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) representatives, they had the provisions of the program explained to them by Afghan government representatives and then all eighteen signed statements pledging loyalty to the Karzai government.

Part of that loyalty statement to the Afghan government included an agreement not to possess heavy weapons or take up arms against the Afghan government or Coalition forces.

Their next giant step was getting photographed and filling out personal information forms for their new reconciliation identification cards. Once that was completed they were greeted and physically embraced by Governor Taniwal as he welcomed them back into Afghan society.

Governor Taniwal said through an interpreter, "Today we made another important step towards bringing complete peace to our province. By working together and talking about our differences we have found the means to bring some of our fellow Afghans home to Paktia to again become important members of the community, helping to build our quality of life and the peace we all seek."

He went on to say, "We are also enjoying the results of our enduring effort to bring allegiance and reconciliation to Afghanistan's new government,

fostering the trust and ownership in a new, democratic way to govern and care for our people. These gentlemen have returned home because of the trust and opportunity they see and heard about from their friends and families here in Paktia."

The Governor's sentiments were echoed by Lt. Col. Stephen Tableman, commander of the Gardez PRT located in Paktia Province. He said, "Paktia Province again demonstrates how a community comes together to restore its government and quality of life by overcoming the memories and results of war and conflict."

Tableman went on to say, "Through Governor Taniwal's pro-active leadership throughout the province, working with his provincial leadership team and the wide range of Mullahs and tribal leaders, he is creating the trust and credibility needed for former warring parties to return home peacefully, pledging their support to the new government."

"These 18 former HiG commanders came here today, returning their families from

Pakistan to a new life in their homeland because they believe in and trust what Governor Taniwal and his government are developing in Paktia."

"We are all very pleased with this peaceful reconciliation and how the governments allegiance and reconciliation progress is succeeding in bringing the peace and development sought by the people of Paktia," said Tableman.

The healing process for the new, freely elected, government of Afghanistan takes giant steps forward every time a former commander or soldier lays down their arms and picks up the tools of reconstruction as they embrace their new Afghanistan.

Every day more and more Anti Coalition Militia realizes that to continue fighting their country's growth is not only a lost battle but is also not what 99.9% of the citizens of Afghanistan want.

Afghanistan now sees what a bright new future lays ahead of them and they want to be a part of it. The Pakhm-e Sohl program is part of that bright new tomorrow.

ANA, Coalition rescue flood victims

Combined Forces Afghanistan News Release

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - The Afghan National Army and local government officials coordinated efforts with Coalition forces to rescue 119 Afghans stranded on a small island by floodwaters.

The stranded individuals were lifted to safety by a Coalition helicopter Thursday as waters rose on the Indus River near Mehtar Lam in the Logman province. A dam upstream gave way sending water downstream trapping the group.

Afghan National Army soldiers on the island coordinated the aircraft loading and were dispensing aid supplies to the victims at a safer area approximately 300 meters away.

The Logman province deputy governor, working in conjunction with aid agencies, coordinated the rescue effort

with Coalition forces. Aid agencies are working with local officials in the area to ensure that Afghans displaced by the flooding have access to shelter, medical attention and food.

"This is a perfect example of the Afghan government, taking the lead, working with Afghan National Army and Coalition forces to save lives," said Lt. Col. Jerry O'Hara Combined Joint Task Force-76 spokesman. "We are continuing to work with the government of Afghanistan to ensure the people displaced by this tragic disaster

receive the aid they need."

A provincial reconstruction team at Methar Lam is working closely with aid agencies and local Afghan leaders to assist in relief efforts.



The Deputy governor of Logman Province, working with Afghan National Army, Coalition Forces and aid agencies assists with the rescue of people stranded by the flooding of Indus River June 23.

White Devils donate medical clinic on wheels

By Master Sgt. Geoffrey Carter
Combined Task Force Devil PAO

KHOWST, Afghanistan- The Khost Provincial Government in conjunction with Coalition Forces recently donated a Mobil Medical Vehicle to the Ministry of Health, in order to provide better medical services and care to remote, isolated regions of Khowst Province.

The vehicle donation ceremony was conducted at the Khost Ministry of Tribal Affairs and was attended by Dr. Amir Bad Shah,



Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke

The specially modified compartments seen in the medical truck donated to the Khowst Ministry of Health by Task Force White Devil

Minister of Public Health, Lt. Col. George Donovan, commander of 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, Maj. Cory Costello, Combined Task Force Devil Surgeon, Maj. Chuck Miller, commander of the Khowst Provincial Reconstruction Team, Cpt. David Harper, 2nd Bn. surgeon and various tribal elders.

"The reason we are donating this vehicle is simple. Over the past few months I have visited

many of the villages throughout the Khost Province and found some of those villages do not have a clinic or a medical provider. With this vehicle local doctors from Khost can drive out to remote locations and provide care and medicine to those in need," Harper said.

The dark blue SUV featured an elaborate system of drawers built into the back seat and trunk area that can hold cases of medicines and ointments. This storage allows a doctor and one assistant to drive out to any village and set up a clinic in minutes.

"The efforts of the Provincial Public Health Department and the Ministry of Health are examples of the ways the



Master Sgt. Geoffrey Carter

Lt. Col. George Donovan (left) discusses the medical vehical donation with Minister of Health for the Khost Province Dr. Amir Bad Shah (suit) while MAJ Cory Costello (right), Combined Task Force Devil Surgeon listens in.

Government of Afghanistan is working toward a better future," Donovan added.

"I am confident that as Afghanistan continues to rebuild its government, made up of freely elected representatives, improvements to public health would only be a part to the overall relief brought to those remote villagers who might be suffering," Donovan said.

As elders were nodding their approval the Minister of Tribal Affairs, Mohamid Tahir Sabar, reminded them that this vehicle was to be used for official use only and to maximize the amount of aid that could be brought to the outlying regions of Khost Province.



Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke

A paratrooper from Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 4th Air Defense Artillery Regiment on patrol in Afghanistan.

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added comparing his unit's operations to his previous deployment to Afghanistan in 2003.

It is that kind of motivation that has caused the Soldiers to improve on a daily basis, added Redford.

He also stressed that every military occupational specialty be prepared to support a mission that would normally be conducted by infantry troops.

"We are Soldiers first, and need to focus on those types of basic Soldier skills," said Redford. "All combat support MOS's need to be mentally focused to complete whatever mission is assigned to us."

Up Front & Centered: What kind of leader are you?

By Master Sgt. Geoffrey Carter
Combined Task Force Devil PAO

Soldiers in the Army understand that it takes teamwork to win wars. Athletes understand that without teamwork you can't win games. So why do some businesses miss the correlation between being successful and working as a team?

Ken Blanchard's book *The One Minute Manager Builds High Performing Teams* has a quote that says it all: "None of us is as smart as all of us."

Managers and leaders may think they know all the answers, but when they involve other team members in the process, those second and third opinions could make a positive difference. That's why managers and leaders need to focus their business and even war-fighting attention on building high-performing teams.

To be a better leader the first step is evaluating your perceptions. Like Blanchard says, "most managers track the content of what was done at a meeting and ignore the process of how the group functions."

The first step toward building high-performing teams begins with observing how your group or team interacts. You as a manager must step back and just observe at your next office meeting

or military briefing. If that isn't possible delegate someone else to act as an observer and have them take notes on:

Communication and participation - who talks to whom and who talks most often. Decision making - how a group goes about selecting a course of action.

Conflict - it's inevitable and necessary but how is it handled in a group.

Leadership - it's all about who is influencing whom.

Roles and Goals - who does what and what are they trying to accomplish.

Norms - are the ground rules that regulate the group's behavior.

Problem solving - involves identifying and formulating problems and solutions.

Group climate - refers to the feeling or tone of the group.

Individual behavior - focuses on what team members are doing to help accomplish the task(s).

The One Minute Manager believes, "all group leaders and group members need to practice the skill of being a participant observer in team meetings," but warns that, "some people refer to meetings as a place where you take minutes and waste hours." Make sure you plan and carry out all your meetings within a set time frame and with a liberal dose of oral give-and-take.

There are five basic areas that Blanchard's book stresses as necessary

for team development. First you have to determine purpose and values, set goals and roles and build the team charter. Follow that with diagnosis of the development level of the group. Third, match appropriate leadership style and then deliver the appropriate leadership style. Finally begin to manage the journey to group empowerment.

As a manager or leader of a high-performing team, your job is to educate your people, to help them develop to the point where they can take responsibility for their work and to give them opportunities to perform.

I will end with this thought. To be or become a good leader you must follow the aforementioned formula but most importantly you must lead by example.

We want to hear from you

Are you an aspiring writer or photographer? We want to use your stories and photos in the *Desert Devil Dispatch* to highlight the great things the men and women of Regional Command-East are doing. For more information, e-mail Master Sgt. Geoffrey Carter at carterg@cjt76.centcom.mil.

Signal

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first hand how important good communications are in every aspect of the chain of command; from the troops in the field, to the headquarters staff.

"As an infantryman our ability to communicate on the battlefield is one of our biggest advantages over the enemy," Rodriguez said.

With state of the art technology creating a near seamless ability to communicate on the battlefield, troops in the signal business haven't lost sight of the most important asset of the task force, the individual Soldier.

"Knowledgeable operators are the most valuable tool (in the task force)," said Sgt. Paul Allen, a Beaverton, Ore., native and tactical satellite radio operator with CTF Devil Headquarters.



Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke

Spc. Israel Hernandez, a "cable dog" with the 44th Signal Battalion and Bakersfield, Calif., native, runs communications lines into a building at Forward Operating Base Salerno. The 44th is responsible for all the telephone and internet communications on FOB Salerno.